

The 2 f/cc occupational standard is intended to protect workers from asbestosis and is based upon the acceptance of a minimal risk of developing this disease. Dose-response relationships at such a level of exposure have not been sufficiently established to enable the assessment of risk of development of cancers. It is expected however that the lower the level of exposure, the less the risk of developing cancer. Regulations concerned with occupational exposure to asbestos should require the use of the best available control technology in equipment and practice.

### Environmental Control

The asbestos dust level in the general environment is so much lower than in occupational settings that there appears to be little or no risk to the public. However, in comparison to the general environment, somewhat elevated levels of exposure to asbestos dust may occur in the neighbourhood of industries emitting asbestos, and during the utilization or disposal of certain materials containing asbestos.

Federal regulations require that air which is exhausted from asbestos mines and mills to the environment should not contain more than 2 f/cc at the point of emission. It is intended that these regulations will be extended to manufacturing industries.

Canadian authorities are working with the asbestos mining companies and the manufacturers of asbestos products to alleviate the problem of disposal of wastes and tailings. The industry has taken major steps to improve practice.

In the past, sprayed asbestos fibre has been used for fireproofing and other purposes, and subsequently has been found to release fibres to the atmosphere. This process is no longer used in Canada.

There is no evidence currently available to suggest that there is any risk from the consumption of asbestos contaminated food and drink. In the case of water supply for human consumption, it has been found that minute concentrations of asbestos have long existed in some localities, but studies to date have not found excess incidence of disease in those districts.

In general the greatest concern about the health effects of asbestos has been, and still is, posed by airborne concentrations of asbestos fibre in the workplace.

### Product Safety

Human exposure to asbestos dust as a result of consumer product use appears generally to be very low, and no excess risk has